



**Independent  
Media Arts Alliance**  
Alliance des arts  
médiatiques indépendants

**ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008**

Presented to the membership  
at the 2008 Annual General Meeting  
June 14<sup>th</sup> 2008  
Kelowna, British Columbia

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## INDEPENDENT MEDIA ARTS ALLIANCE MANDATE

(From the Letters Patent, March, 1981)

*The Objects of the Corporation are:*

*1) to focus and co-ordinate independent film efforts*

*2) to provide for continued communication in the form of a general assembly (AGM) of representatives of member groups at least once a year*

*The general assembly (AGM) shall be a:*

- *forum of communication and discussion among independent film groups*
- *an opportunity for developing links, personal and filmic, between all cultural elements of the alliance*
- *a means to promote a positive connection with film agencies and organisations in the government and private sectors.*

In 1989 the name was changed to include video, in 1994 the members voted to include electronic media in the Alliance mandate and at the 2003 AGM, the members decided to change the name of the corporation to Independent Media Arts Alliance in order to better suit the diversity of practices that the Alliance represents.

In February 2004, a special Governance meeting was held which aimed at improving the Alliance's governance structure in views of its recent growth and membership diversification. A new mission statement was then developed:

*The Independent Media Arts Alliance is a national arts service organization that advances the interests of a vibrant media arts community.*

## EXECUTIVE REPORT

What an oddly different year this has been !

It has been a short “year” of just eight months as we move from one operational mode to another in our attempt to grapple with new times and new circumstances brought on in large measure by the success of a growing membership. And, we hope, not just growing numbers but increased strengths in our capacities to attend to the many pressing issues confronting media artists in Canada.

It has also been the year in which our extraordinarily capable National Director Jennifer Dorner has taken an unexpected leave of absence, a circumstance which could seriously disrupt many organizations which largely operate with volunteer power. Our depth of field is such that IMAA’s Administrative Coordinator François-Xavier Tremblay has stepped into the position as Interim National Director with tremendous capacity and energy. We should offer a round of applause from all of our members coast to coast for Jennifer and for FX. The independent media arts really are very fortunate to have such dedicated and capable leaders.

And this has been the year in which you have a President who does not come directly from a media arts environment but from the visual arts. Two issues early on came to my attention - ones which needed little savvy with media but which are important for an organization as it matures and comes of age. Our bylaws were tattered, incomplete and out-of-date; they were in need of some attention. And because it is such a significant aspect of IMAA’s programme, the annual conference is always an issue. My concern was with trying to urge us to make the decisions as to where the upcoming conferences would be - in 2010 and 2012 - in order that planning can begin for what we must consider to be “major” events.

Let there be no mistake, *On Common Ground* is a major event. For that we have to acknowledge the work and effort which between them the Alternator Gallery, the Ullus Collective and the National Indigenous Media Arts Coalition have brought to bear. Congratulations! And, on behalf of the thousands of independent media artists across Canada, thank you!

**John Murchie**

IMAA President

on behalf of the Executive Committee

## **INTERIM NATIONAL DIRECTOR REPORT**

If last year's National Director Report was opening with the mention of several landmark anniversaries for some of our member organizations, this year's is all about celebrating new beginnings. In March, our National Director Jennifer Dorner left for a 10 months maternity leave and we are happy to report that she is now the mother of a fabulous little girl that is already taking a keen interest in media arts. Jennifer will be back in January 2009 and I have been asked to take her place for the interim period. I am looking forward to continue her amazing work under the direction of our dedicated Board and of the IMAA membership.

Also, 2008 marks the end of a thorough self-reflective investigation and the beginning of a new period of growth and consolidation for our organization. Following the 2006 Flying Squad Organizational Capacity Building consultation project and in preparation for securing NASO status for the IMAA, our Board decided to proceed with the revision of our current by-laws. A subcommittee was struck and a consultant hired through a second Flying Squad grant. By reaffirming the core values of our mandate and founding principles while outlining the central role of our membership in all decisions and actions, the revised bylaws are giving the organization the means to continue to move forward. They have been sent to all the members in April and will be voted on at the 2008 AGM.

Finally, this year is marked by the first edition of our new biennial national gathering and I am proud to report that the Steering Committee behind *On Common Ground* did an amazing job to put together a very exciting event. The six-day festival was co-produced by the IMAA, the Alternator Gallery, the Ullus Collective, the National Indigenous Media Arts Coalition and UBC Okanagan. Organizing a conference of this scale is never an easy feat and the people behind this year's edition overcame their unusual share of challenges. Thanks to the leadership of Jennifer Dorner, the expertise of Liz Barron (NIMAC) and the astounding dedication and steadfast commitment of co-hosts Jennifer Pickering (Alternator) and Tracey Kim Bonneau (Ullus), this signature IMAA event is now entering a bright new era.

### **A Strong Advocate For Media Arts**

When the federal government made the announcement that it would increase the Canada Council's parliamentary appropriation by an additional \$30 million, the IMAA began its lobby to the Council to ensure that the Media Arts section would receive an equitable increase. As directed by the membership, the IMAA's strategy was to work with Youssef El Jaï, Head of the Media Arts Section so that our needs and concerns would be carried forward to the decision makers.

These concerns were first outlined in a letter to Robert Sirman in the Spring of 2007 and then reaffirmed in meetings with Youssef El Jaï and other media arts officers. The Canada Council held a meeting with the National Art Service Organizations in Ottawa on February 12th to announce its action plan for 2008 – 2011. The IMAA was in attendance alongside the NIMAC and was happy to hear that the needs of the media arts were recognized as this section received a fair increase relative to the media arts previous budget. A letter was sent to Youssef El Jaï to acknowledge his section's good work on behalf of our sector and to remind him of our commitment to continue working together

towards our shared goals. We still have a lot of work ahead to catch up to the other sections, to rectify the historical inequity that our sector has faced over the past and to meet the needs of a growing and diversified field.

Further to working directly with the Council, the IMAA approached its lobby efforts from another angle. Jennifer Dorner met in November 2007 with Jean-Pierre Gauthier, Director of Film and Video Programs at Heritage and Karyn Wichers, Policy Analyst for the Film and Video Programs. The meeting was initiated by the IMAA to discuss how the many smaller non-profit media arts organizations are deemed inadmissible under the various Heritage programs. In addition, we presented a list of recommendations for Heritage, aimed to address the many other challenges that our sector faces.

The IMAA anticipates continuing these discussions with Heritage and with the Canada Council for the Arts and the dialogue between both of them is already initiated. Our goal is to see an injection of funds go directly to the Canada Council's media arts section under the premise that the current funding to the media arts section is far below other sections at Council including visual arts, dance, music, theatre, writing and publishing. This is unreasonable given the size and scope of our sector and the urgent needs that our sector faces.

In addition, Jennifer Dorner presented the IMAA brief to the Standing Committee in early December 2007. Our recommendations reflected the need for increased funds to the Canada Council, that the \$30 million was not enough. We also urged for capital support for organizations seeking to purchase spaces, funds for the preservation of media art works, for the renewal of the Tomorrow Starts Today initiative and for a cultural donation tax initiative for donors to encourage the funding of arts and culture organizations.

More recently, the IMAA wrote twice to the Honorable Josée Verner, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages. First we asked if the Minister of Canadian Heritage was planning to set in process the development of a federal cultural policy, involving representatives of the arts community across Canada, with the aim of guiding the government in determining how to support the arts in Canada. The response from her office stated that Canada doesn't have an overall culture policy but rely instead on "a wide range of vigorous policy and program instruments that support Canadian culture."

Our other letter to Josée Verner contested the amendments to the Income Tax Act in Bill C-10 which would allow the Minister of Canadian Heritage to deny eligibility to tax credits of productions determined to be contrary to public policy. The amendments proposed in Bill C-10 constitute censorship and thus the withdrawal of access to tax credits would effectively make it impossible to create certain films in Canada. A similar letter was also sent to W. David Angus and Yoine Goldstein, Chair and Deputy Chair of the Senatorial Standing Committee on Banking Banking Trade and Commerce, as well as to all the members of the committee. Our advocacy subcommittee is monitoring the evolution of the Bill C-10 debate and we will be looking forward to more feedback from our membership in terms of future advocacy initiatives on this issue.

## **At The Center of Our Community**

Through the exchange of ideas, strategies and success stories, the IMAA subcommittees continue to move forward with their various objectives. The work is ongoing on the development of the media arts rate schedule and the subcommittee is presently investigating rates for webcasting, online distribution as well as technical workshops and lectures. Two of our long-awaited toolkits (freedom of expression and outreach to Aboriginal artists and communities) are on the verge of being available through our website. Other key objectives set out by our subcommittees include outreach to diverse communities, addressing the critical need to preserve media art works and gathering data about employment standards within artist run organizations.

This last objective was partly addressed by the recent release of a new study by the Cultural Human Resources Council. Our lobby to the CHRC paid off when they offered us to invite our members to participate to their study of the audiovisual sector. While mostly industry-focused, it still managed to make room for our centers, some of which are mentioned in relation to best practices. The report recommends that "[t]he workshops, creative incubators, and on-set training opportunities provided by Canada's formidable network of artist run coops should move beyond happenstance to become a more formalized, adequately financed program, used by the mainstream industry, and supported by government and the private sector."<sup>1</sup> The recognition of coops as training providers is a first step and since the CHRC is acknowledging that the "study is by no means comprehensive" and that "additional data will be sought" we will make sure to suggest them to work more closely with our centres for potential future research projects.

This example is a good indicator of the importance of fostering and maintaining strong partnerships with other like-minded organizations. Aside from being member of the CHRC, the IMAA continues to collaborate with the Observatoire du documentaire, follows closely the activities of the Canadian Conference of the Arts and keeps on strengthening its network ties with the Artist-Run Centres and Collective Conference (ARCCC). The IMAA was also involved this year in the launch of the Visual Arts Alliance, a newly formed network of organizations aiming at bridging the gap between visual and media arts while moving forward on common key issues.

Another one of our partners was holding a major gathering this year. The National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture, our sister organization in the United States, was organizing its biennial conference in Austin, Texas, on October 10-14, 2007. François-Xavier Tremblay was invited to present on a panel entitled "Without Borders?" that addressed mobile technologies employed by artists and media makers in the field to change distribution and production methods, as well as shifting border control policies that impact media access and distribution. He talked about some of the initiatives happening in Canadian independent media art and stressed the importance of advocating for the payment of artists fees and adequate support from various public and private organizations, both key elements for a strong and sustainable independent sector.

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<sup>1</sup> *Training Gaps Analysis - Below-the-line Film & Television Workers*, prepared for the Cultural Human Resources Council by Lowenbe Holdings Ltd. and Benoit DuBois, April 18, 2008, p. 8

Closer to home, François-Xavier Tremblay also attended the Ontario regional meeting that was held on April 11<sup>th</sup>, during the Images Festival. The meeting was well attended and the regional representatives discussed various provincial advocacy initiatives and strategies. IMAAontario was also hosting an event called *Media Arts Matters!* and both the afternoon forum (featuring speakers Clive Robertson, Vera Frenkel, Richard Fung, Steve Loft and Caroline Seck Langill) and the evening collaborative projection event were very successful.

### **Improving Communications**

It might be difficult to fully appreciate the breadth of the work that was done in the past two years to consolidate the operational capacity of the IMAA. Even if some of the details still need fine tuning, the organization is now equipped with better tools to address the needs of its membership. Our new website is now getting more and more traffic and our online forums should be fully implemented very soon. With our new dynamic Administrative Coordinator Claudine Douaire now at the helm of communications with our members and others partners, the IMAA's voice will be increasingly present in 2008-09.

The prevailing assertion at the last AGM was that the IMAA needed to raise its profile in order to gain the status that it merits among federal funding agencies, legislative officials and the communities in which it operates. Following the Open Forum, the IMAA Board of Directors and staff drafted an action plan that outlined prioritized goals and then spent the rest of the year working to advance them. We are looking forward to the direction that will provide the membership for the coming year and are hoping to be in constant dialogue with our members through improved regional and sectorial communications.

As stated in the proposed new mandate, “[t]he Independent Media Arts Alliance is a *member-driven* non-profit national organization working to advance and strengthen the media arts community in Canada.” Call us, drop by the office, write us a line. Keep us posted.

This Alliance is yours.

**François-Xavier Tremblay**  
Interim National Director

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2007-2008**

**Marie Beauchesne**, Quebec Director

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**Maureen Bradley**, Pacific Director

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**Felipe Diaz**, Prairie and NWT Director

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**Linda Feese**y, Ontario Director

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**Walter Forsyth**, Atlantic Director

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**Steve Loft**, NIMAC Director

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**Isabelle L'Italien**, Quebec Director

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**Sandee Moore**, Prairie and NWT Director

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**John Murchie**, President

c/o Faucet Media Arts Centre 7 Lorne Street Sackville, NB E4L 3Z6

**Peter Sandmark**, Pacific Director

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## Members of the IMAA as of May 2008

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### Alberta Media Arts Alliance Society (AMAAS)

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### Alternator Gallery

Rotary Centre for the Arts  
421 Cawston Avenue, #103  
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### Antitube

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### Artengine

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### Atlantic Filmmakers Cooperative (AFCOOP)

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### Available Light Screening Collective

Arts Court  
2 Daly Avenue  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6E2  
availablelightcollective@gmail.com

### Avatar

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### La Bande Vidéo

541 St-Vallier Est, BP 2  
Québec, QC G1K 3P9  
labandevideo@meduse.org  
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### Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre (CFMDC)

401 Richmond Street West, #119  
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director@cfmdc.org  
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### Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers (CSIF)

Building J2, 2711 Battleford Avenue SW  
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### Centre for Art Tapes (CFAT)

CBC Radio Building  
5600 Sackville Street, #207  
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cfat.communication@ns.sympatico.ca  
<http://www.centreforarttapes.ca>

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### Cinevic

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**Cineworks**

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**Coop Vidéo de Montréal**

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**DAÏMŌN**

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**Dreamspeakers**

8726 112 Avenue NW  
Edmonton, AB T5B 0G6  
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**Ed Video Media Art Center**

16A Wyndham Street North, P.O. Box 1629  
Guelph, ON N1H 6R7  
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**EMMEDIA**

351 11 Avenue SW, #203  
Calgary, AB T2R 0C7  
emmedia@emmedia.ca  
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**Faucet Media Arts Centre & Struts  
Gallery**

7 Lorne Street  
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**Film and Video Arts (FAVA)**

Ortona Armoury Arts Building  
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Edmonton, AB T5K 0X4  
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**Les Films de l'Autre**

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http://www.lesfilmsdelautre.com

**Les Films du 3 mars (F3M)**

2065 rue Parthenais, #277  
Montréal, QC H2K 3T1  
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http://www.f3m.ca

**Film Zone / Festival international du  
cinéma francophone en Acadie (FICFA)**

140 rue Botsford, #27  
Moncton, NB E1C 4X5  
Phone: (506) 855-6050  
Fax: (506) 857-8002  
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**Global Visions Film Festival**

Standard Life Building  
31221-10405 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5J 3S2  
info@globalvisionsfestival.com  
http://www.globalvisionsfestival.com

**Groupe Intervention Vidéo (GIV)**

4001 rue Berri, #105  
Montréal, QC H2L 4H2  
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http://www.givideo.org

**Images Festival**

401 Richmond Street West, #448  
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scott@imagesfestival.com  
http://www.imagesfestival.com

**imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts  
Festival**

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**Independent Filmmakers Co-operative of Ottawa**

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**Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT)**

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**Main Film**

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**New University Television (NUTV)**

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Saskatoon, SK S7M 0X4  
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**Peterborough Arts Umbrella / Optic Nerve Film Festival**

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Peterborough, ON K9H 4B9  
info@pauart.ca  
http://www.pauart.com

**Planet in Focus - International Environmental Film & Video Festival (PIF)**

55 Mill Street, Case Goods Warehouse  
Building 74, Studio 402  
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**Pleasure Dome**

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**Productions et Réalisations Indépendantes de Montréal (PRIM)**

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**Quickdraw Animation Society (QAS)**

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**Reel Asian - Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival**

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**Saskatchewan Filmpool Co-operative**

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**Spirafilm**

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**Studio XX**

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**Urban Shaman Gallery**  
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**Vidéo Femmes**  
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**Vidéographe**  
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**Video Pool**  
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**VIVO Media Arts**  
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**VTape**  
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<http://www.vtape.org>

**Western Artic Moving Pictures (WAMP)**  
Box 2487  
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P8  
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<http://www.wamp.ca>

**Western Front**  
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**Winnipeg Aboriginal Film Festival (WAFF)**  
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info@winnipegfilmgroup.com  
<http://www.winnipegfilmgroup.com>

**Workman Arts / RendezVous With Madness Film Festival**  
1001 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M6J 1H4  
info@rendezvouswithmadness.com  
<http://www.rendezvouswithmadness.com>

**Yukon Film Society**  
4137 C 4th Avenue  
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 1H8  
yukonfilmsociety@yknet.ca  
<http://www.yukonfilmsociety.com>

## **IMAA BACKGROUNDER**

### **FOUNDING PRINCIPLES**

Our groups are distinct from one another and we value these differences. Just as we, as individuals, are able to pool our resources to mutual advantage in organizations which protect and promote individual free expression, it is possible and desirable to unite film, video, audio and new media groups, each with its own character, in an alliance. The IMAA does not limit itself to one genre, ideology or aesthetic but furthers diversity of vision in artistic and social consciousness.

The IMAA members make a commitment to take anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-homophobic positions in terms of hiring, distribution, production and representation. Also they respect and support the autonomy of native cultural representation.

The IMAA believes that independent film, video, audio and new media are valuable and vital forms of expression of our respective cultures, which can uncover the prevailing illusions and expose the formulas that underlie the vast majority of commercial and institutional messages.

### **HISTORY**

As a result of several formative meetings by representatives of a number of film production, distribution and exhibition groups from across Canada, the Independent Film Alliance was founded in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, in November 1980. Subsequently incorporated as a non-profit organization, the Alliance saw its mandate and its membership grow. To better reflect these mutations, the organization's name changed in the mid-nineties to Independent Film & Video Alliance (IFVA). Later, at the Annual General Meeting in 2002, the members - now also constituted of audio art and new media groups- voted for the organization's name to be changed for Independent Media Arts Alliance/Alliance des arts médiatiques indépendants (IMAA/AAMI). The mandate of the Alliance hasn't changed; its work, undertaken with recognized expertise and diplomacy, has become wider and diversified.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership is open to any non profit organization in Canada whose mandate is to encourage, promote and facilitate the independent production, distribution and exhibition of films, videos, audio and new media works. The Independent Media Arts Alliance (IMAA) defines an independent production as being a work over which the artist maintains full creative and editorial control at all stages, from production to exhibition.

Membership applications should be submitted to the national office (see address in the form). Membership fees follow a sliding scale based on the organization's operating budget:

Less than 100.000 \$	>	100
100.000 to 300.000 \$	>	200
More than \$300.000	>	300

All members must support the creation, distribution or presentation of media arts and

- > be not-for-profit, a member-driven co-op, or an artist collective,
- > be artist initiated and controlled,
- > pay fees to artists,
- > support sexual and gender equality in the centre,
- > support cultural equity,
- > share the aims and objectives of the IMAA.

All members

- > receive copies of all IMAA publications,
- > receive regular updates from the national office about the advocacy work,
- > receive a formal invitation to participate to the AGM (the IMAA offers travel subsidies to some members organizations),
- > have the right to vote at the AGM,
- > are listed as members of the IMAA.

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At the Annual General Meeting, members set the IMAA's agenda by making recommendations. These are then reviewed by the Board of Director that set priorities for the organization's activities in the form of an annual Action Plan. The implementation of the Action Plan is carried out by the National Director, under the supervision of the President and the Board.